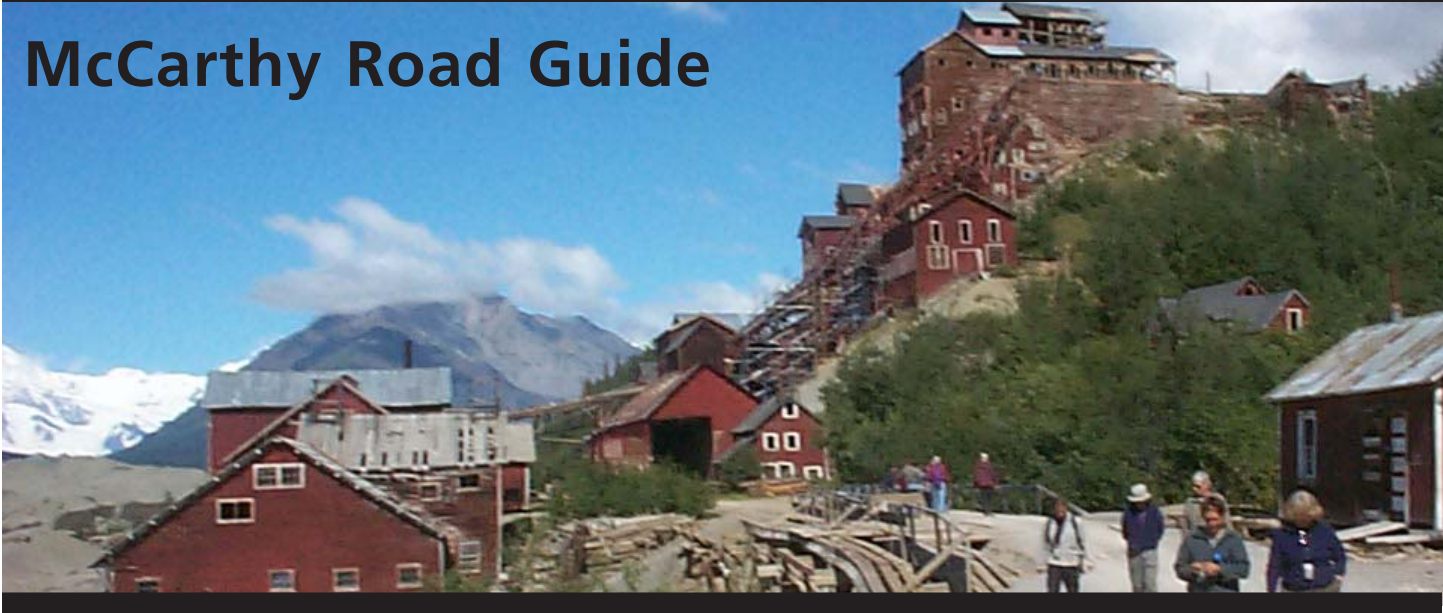




McCarthy Road Guide



The 61-mile McCarthy road offers Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve visitors a unique opportunity to explore interior Alaska. Natural and historic wonders await those visitors willing to accept travel and access on Alaskan terms. This road guide provides the traveler with information and details necessary in planning a trip to McCarthy and Kennecott.

Private Property

Private property adjoins much of the McCarthy road and both the McCarthy/Kennecott area. Please respect the privacy of these areas. Information on federal land

access or private property locations is available at park headquarters, Chitina Ranger Station and the National Park Service kiosk at Mile 60 of the McCarthy Road.

Chitina

All McCarthy/Kennecott visitors are encouraged to visit the Chitina Ranger Station open daily in season. Current road conditions, land status details and general area information are available. Services available at Chitina include a post office, gas station, food store, café and telephone.

Remember, services are limited once you begin your journey along the McCarthy Road



Chitina station

McCarthy Road

allow three hours each way

Beyond Chitina, the 61-mile gravel road follows the abandoned Copper River and Northwest Railroad bed to the Kennicott River.

Please drive slowly as traffic and weather may create ruts and washboard effect. In places, old railroad ties may surface along with anchoring spikes creating unexpected hazards. The road is narrow in places and slower moving traffic is encouraged to allow passing at turnouts.

Under normal summer conditions most two-wheel drive vehicles can make the trip. Allow a minimum of three hours for each leg of the trip.

In wet weather the road often becomes muddy and slippery. Portions of the road may be subject to washouts after heavy rains. Soft shoulders have led to numerous accidents and vehicle damage.

Carry at least one spare tire and an adequate car jack. Most people spend a minimum of two days exploring the McCarthy/Kennecott area. Camping is allowed near the end of the road. Lodging is available at McCarthy and Kennecott. Reservations are recommended. Other services available include: guided river trips, food, shuttle service to Kennecott, a saloon and air charters.

Kennicott River

The McCarthy Road ends at the Kennicott River. Visitors may park in the designated areas according to posted signs near the footbridge. The land is privately owned except for the 100-foot state road right-of-way. There is limited free parking, and also parking or camping for a fee on private property.

Pit toilets are provided in the upper parking lot but **water is not available**. There are no garbage dumps here...Visitors are encouraged to remove their own trash.

WARNING!

Speed limit should be reduced to approximately 25 mph.

Frequent bear activity in McCarthy/Kennicott area, please be cautious.

Mileposts

The following highlights are points of interest as indicated on the map of the McCarthy Road. The mileage begins at the east end of the Copper River Bridge and concludes at the Kennicott River. Begin mileage readings as you finish crossing the large bridge over the Copper River.

- 0.1** The State of Alaska Department of Transportation maintains an eight site, free campground with picnic tables, grills, a dumpster and pit toilets. High winds and blowing dust are prevalent in the area throughout the summer.

- 3.9** A pullout with a view of the Chugach Mountains and the Chitina River is located on the right side of the road.



fishwheels along the Copper River

- 8.9** A small pullout on the left side of the road provides access to a hiking trail to Strelna Lake, one-half mile away. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game stocks this lake with rainbow trout and silver salmon. Private property adjoins the trail and users are asked to respect the rights of private property owners.

- 9.3** The road on the right leads to Silver Lake. This lake is stocked with rainbow trout by the state.

- 10.9** This turnoff provides access to Sculpin Lake, which is also stocked by the state with rainbow trout.

- 13.5** The access road on the left heads north for 2.5 miles to the backcountry trailheads for Nugget Creek, Dixie Pass and the continuation of the Kotsina Road. NOTE: The access road crosses private property homesteads. Please respect owner privacy by staying on the access trail.

- 14.0** Here the road crosses Strelna Creek. Grayling fishing is possible during the seasonal migrations.

- 17.0** The Kuskulana Bridge, 525 feet long, spans the Kuskulana River, 238 feet below. The historic railroad bridge was completed in 1910 and upgraded in 1988.



Kuskulana Bridge

- 22.5** This marks the boundary between the park and preserve. Wrangell-St. Elias National Preserve allows both sport hunting and trapping with Alaska State licenses.

- 28.5** The road passes over the Gilahina River. The railroad trestle on the left stands as a remnant of the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad abandoned in the late 1930's when copper mining ended in the Kennecott area.

- 44.0** Here the road passes over the Lakina River.

- 57.3** An overlook on the right side of the road allows a view of McCarthy and a glimpse of the toe of the Kennicott Glacier.

- 60.0** On the left is a park service information station. Check here for camping and parking information, trail updates, and maps.

- 61.0** The road ends at the Kennicott River where a privately owned campground and parking lot is. It is a 1/2 mile walk to McCarthy and 4 miles to Kennicott.